

THE
MIRROR OF THE STAGE

OR
New Dramatic Censor;

CONSISTING OF
ORIGINAL MEMOIRS OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTORS,
CRITICISMS

ON THE
NEW PIECES AND PERFORMERS;
ANECDOTES, ORIGINAL ESSAYS,

&c. &c. &c.

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Embellished with striking Portraits by I. R. Cruikshank, Esq. of
Mr. WILKINSON and Mr. JOHN REEVE,
In the various Characters in their new Entertainment.

LONDON:

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We have not heard the circumstances mentioned by "**DRAMATICUS**,"—we should be happy to receive a communication from him on the subject.

"**VERAX**" shall be attended to.

The Tale sent by "**ARTHUR**" will be inserted in a new work, called "**Comic Scraps, or the Actor's Pocket Book**," which will also contain the Entertainments given by Mr. Wilkinson and Mr. J. Reeve.

If "**SCRUTATOR**" will take the trouble to refer to No. IV. of this Work, page 59, he will perceive we have already given a remark on "**Angiolitta, or Grandeur, Love, and Remorse**," as performed at the Surrey, for the Benefit of Mr. Watkins,—it is the "**Clari**" of Covent-Garden.

"**SOUTH**" is not authenticated.

The Selections of "**TOPAZ**" do him great credit; but they are not adapted for this Work.

The "**TALES**" from the Cobourg are too personal.

"**A. B.'s LINES**," certainly in our next.

ADELPHI THEATRE.

Mr. Wilkinson still continues with great success. The house is well attended, and the performance excellent.

VAUXHALL GARDENS.

This delightful place of amusement (which has at a very considerable expense, been newly decorated, and the entertainments much increased in quantity as in quality) though announced to be opened on Monday last, was, in consequence of the coldness of the weather, postponed till this evening. We have heard so much of the improvements, that we shall not fail to have a peep at them, and we promise ourselves the pleasure of giving our friends a "true and particular account" in our next number.

The late Mr. Kemble's will has been registered in Doctors' Commons, probate having issued on the 26th ult. Priscilla Kemble, widow, the sole, £10,000. The settlement of £1,000 per annum, secured by the testator in his life-time for the life of himself and Mrs. Kemble, and the survivor of them, is made over to her, and she is also made residuary legatee for life, and empowered to dispose by will of the principal sum of £4,000 at her death, the residue is vested absolutely in his brother Charles. £60 per annum, to Mrs. Wilson, of Edinburgh, (the testator's sister,) are the only other legacies.—The will is dated the 22nd of November, 1830.

Mr. Sinclair, formerly of Covent Garden Theatre, is engaged at a high salary, as PRIMO TENORE, at Florence.

Among the forthcoming novelties at the Haymarket, is an opera from the pen of Mr. Kenney, of which report speaks highly. A new farce by Mr. T. Dibdin is also accepted, in which the whole comic strength of the company will be brought to bear.

THE Mirror of the Stage;

OR,
NEW DRAMATIC CENSOR.



"To hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature;
To show virtue her own feature; scorn her own image;
And the very age and body o' th' times its form and pressure."

No. 21.] MONDAY, MAY 19th, 1823. [Vol. II.

MEMOIR OF MR. JOHN REEVE.

REDRESSING the promise made in our last, we proceed on the memoir of Mr. J. Reeve, which however is not diversified by the usual provincial exigencies, "hair-breadth escapes," — *tant mieux pour lui*. Mr. J. Reeve was born in the year 1799, on Ludgate-hill, and is of a most respectable family. His father having been a member of the Common Council upwards of twenty years. Like many dramatic practitioners, his fancy was first wooed to the seductive, though tangled path-ways of the stage, by his great success, and evident superiority of declamation at the usual school vacations, where he divided the applause with Mr. Yates, now of Covent Garden, but then his fellow-sufferer, at Mr. Thomson's Academy, Wychmore Hill. Having finished school, he was of course placed behind the counter of his father. That monotonous existence, that frequent station, where "cabin'd, cribb'd, confined" genius, or fancied genius, desponds over its abasement. His father having retired from business, he removed to the house of Messrs. Nevill's, Wholesale Hosiers, Maiden-lane, Wood-street, where occurred one of those accidents of aspiring talents, too frequently inflicted by the unenlightened taste of grosser earth. We here advert to a damp thrown on the glowing mind of Mr. J. Reeve by such ruder beings; and do not think we could give it with greater propriety, or inspire a greater portion of sensibility for the mishaps of merit, and disgust of the unrefined, than in his own words. "At the back of the house (Wood-street) was a very large warehouse, the top of which was well leaded, perfectly flat, &c. here, after the hour of twelve, when all the surrounding neighbours had retired to rest, I used to walk forth with my companion, a youth about my own age, to give vent to my theatrical mania. One evening, (soon after the tragedy

of Brutus in which Mr. Kean made so great a hit) we were going through the scene between Sextus Tarquin and Brutus, when a window opened which looked on to our leads, and a head appeared, begging of us to go to bed and be quiet: we went in for a short time; but soon returned, had not been out again five minutes, when, on a sudden, from the top of one of the houses, there came down the contents of an earthen utensil, that rushed like a torrent down upon the head of my unfortunate partner. I luckily escaped the briny flood, and immediately roared out the curse of Brutus, after the manner of Kean, that soon brought all the neighbours out of their beds, who vented their curses in return, and we retired amidst the pelting of all sorts of articles: the next morning a complaint was made, and the consequence was my departure from the place.

After this he entered the Banking house of Goslings' and Co. Fleet-street; but the theatric flame was not to be extinguished by the just named occurrence—it rather “poured oil upon his fires,” and he with replenished ardour, joined a party of amateurs (by the bye, the most respectable concern of the kind) at Wilson-street, paid his — per week, for which he “walked a certain time” as soldier, waiter, &c. it being a fixed and laudable principle of the manager of this important establishment, not to allow gentlemen the pleasure of great self-exposition, till they were somewhat initiated in the mystery of “their exits and their entrances.” But our hero was not always to play executioner, and announce Lady Betty’s carriage—so *took* the house, PLAYED *Othello* and *Sylvester Daggerwood*, in the latter of course he succeeded. Mr. Rodwell of Drury Lane Theatre having witnessed it, solicited him to play it for his benefit at Drury Lane—“His golden dream was out”—he “jumped at the offer.” Mr. Arnold then engaged him for the English Opera, where he opened in a piece called “*Advertisement*,” in which, imitations being then the *ton*, he met with deserved approbation. The piece was played with applause fifty-two nights: at the close of the house, he was engaged by Messrs. Rodwell and Jones, and appeared at the Adelphi, as *Lord Grizzle*, in “*Tom Thumb*,” his success was deservedly great, but wishing to acquire experience in the regular Drama, he joined Crisp’s company at Cheltenham, and afterwards Macready’s at Bristol. At the opening of the Adelphi in 1822, he again appeared in “*Tom and Jerry*,” he also played *Causewin* in “*Tereza Tomkins*,” certainly much better than *Oxberry*; in “*Green in France*,” and his present pieces of entertainment he was equally successful.

As an actor Mr. J. Reeve must ever please: he possesses a smattering of all, with, perhaps, no exact *finished* principle of the stage: a flippancy of manner, added to mutable physiognomy, dashing exterior, and a determination to excite good-humour;—an actor, who, if wanting a little in nicer circumstances, must ever gratify on the whole.—As a mimic, we conceive him in many things equal to Mathews, and to those who delight in broad and happy caricature, we know no one so capable of catering for their amusement as Mr. J. Reeve in the present entertainment of “*Trifles Light as Air*.”

MISS F. H. KELLY.

Reply to the Letter of "DRAMATICUS," in the "Sunday Monitor" of May the 9th.

When a man goes a fishing, all that bite must be attended to, though worthless perhaps, yet to make way for more noble nibblers. So with us: our post being expressly to regard the Stage, and all thereunto belonging: every malapert must be answered, though even with *one touch*.—A "DRAMATICUS" has put forth many queries respecting the "caprice, cruelty, insanity, injustice," of allowing Miss Kelly to remain in the "tomb of the Capulets." Rome, it is said, was saved by the cackling of *geese*; and that any part of the public should not be awakened to illiberal feeling by a *similar cry*, we notice this gentleman, so well-versed in "vanity, conceit, professional jealousy, green-room, cabal, &c. &c." This querist *may be a disinterested enquirer*; but we strongly suspect him to be "one of the brazier's company." After avowing his concern for the *best interests* of the drama, he commences describing forth the debut of Miss F. H. Kelly in "figurative excellence" as—

"It was, Sir, at this inauspicious era in the annals of that Theatre (Covent Garden) that a *STAR*, resplendent in *might and majesty* arose, to chase from its chill and cheerless precincts the pervading gloom; and *as the fair EMPRESS OF THE NIGHT controls the ocean*, to restore the ebbing tide of popularity to its long forsaken channel."

A star!—Surely DRAMATICUS means a *FIXED star only shining in one part*: but no, this star possessed the power of the *moon*! We think it the most charitable opinion to allow that it certainly has *over DRAMATICUS*. But by his deposition all were *touched*, for—

"Indeed, so despotic was her 'rule o'er the ascendant,' and so complete her conquest of *ALL hearts*, that even the Newspaper censors, unanimous in their approval, involuntarily relinquished the cold invidious task of criticism, analysis was *lost in ADMIRATION*; and that icy barrier of indifference which had so long opposed the expression of *unqualified eulogia*, melted in a moment, before the genial and resistless influence of that new-found luminary, whose

'—beauty hung upon the cheek of night,
Like a rich jewel in an Æthiop's ear.'

Miss F. H. KELLY's *Juliet* was indeed applauded, and, in many instances, most deservedly; but *unqualified eulogia* in her case would have been undue praise. But we would advise DRAMATICUS, if a bachelor, and unengaged, should he *ever* go a-wooing, to carry the flattering glass, which discovered *where* this "beauty hung,"—surely it must have been one of a *magnifying* description; and if thus wonderful in making so much of a *little*, how charming in its effects on more favored objects. But for the managerial pickings.—

"Under the propitious aspect of this fair star, (*star again!*) the theatrical coffer, that, like a fat churchwarden's lean protégé, had long been in a galloping consumption, assumed, an almost *instantaneously* aldermanic plenitude. In short, Sir, to discard simile and comparison, in the attractive talents of this admirable young actress, the Manager of Covent Garden at last found something to counterpoise to the long-preponderating influence of his formidable opponents."

For what does man pursue an avocation?—interest, worldly profit: What other motive prevails on Mr. Kemble, or any other manager in the conduct of a theatre? And is it to be supposed, that if

Miss Kelly could by her talent, have served the interest of her employers; would they in opposition to such universal principle have debarred themselves from such attainment? would they "have taken eggs for money?"

He now puts an *overwhelming* interrogative, a tremendous question, backed and followed by thipant brothers and sisters, the *samble* on our notice, but whose *diableries* excite laughter, wher they would raise prejudice.—

"What; then, it may be added, could have so stultified his intellect, as to induce him to prefer the performance of melodrama and pantomime, to that of the immortal productions of a Shakspeare, Otway, and a Rowe,—and that, too, at a time, when his theatre possessed so talented a representative of their respective heroines as Miss F. H. Kelly? Why have we been incessantly presented with a capering Columbine, and deprived of Miss Kelly's *Cordelia*? Are the grotesque contortions and ludicrous grins of the Grimaldis, and the melo-dramatic howlings of Cooke and Fauley, to supersede the *smiles* and *graces*, and harmonious intonation of Miss Kelly's *Portia*?"

As the *Miller and his Men*, the *Sleeping Beauty*, or the *Vision off the Sun*, has never been played as a *first* piece, the *usual* order of precedence for "Shakspeare, Otway, and Rowe," Messrs. Grimaldis, Cooke, and Fauley, we acquit you of all blame that *might* have been incurred by your intrusion to the sacrifice of "the *smiles* and *graces*, and harmonious intonation of Miss Kelly's *Portia*."

DRAMATICUS has stumbled but on one tolerable remark, and that is in his characterizing the existence, with censure, for the too frequent repetition of *Maid Marian*.—

"I know not by what strange potency of perverted judgment the acting manager has been prompted to risk the (so called) opera of *Maid Marian*, until its last disgusted auditor had ran away—(N. B. This we think is meant for a pun)—a heterogeneous hash of imbecility and nonsense—a beggar's-dish of a drama,—wherein he hath himself figured as a doughty drunken friar, and with the Bacchanalian chaunt of *The bramble, the bramble!* hath tickled, or rather, tortured, the ears of a succession of thin audiences for half a season."

By this rule, Mr. Braham will next perform *Iago*, that he may "tickle ears" by singing "*King Stephen was a worthy Peer.*"

Having sufficiently discussed the merits of DRAMATICUS, we shall conclude our extracts with his enquiring of—

"What fatuity could have operated to lead him (or the manager) so directly from the path of his own pecuniary interest, as well as that of the many individuals by whom he has been deputed to wield the managerial truncheon? What could possibly have induced him to check a highly-gifted and accomplished young Lady, in a career of histrionic triumph, of which the records of the British Stage can furnish so few examples?—to sacrifice to his caprice or cruelty—his insanity or his injustice, the rapidly growing fame of her, for whom heaven and genius have done so much, and managers so little? All these, Sir, are questions which may perhaps be generally answered by the words—vanity, conceit, professional jealousy, green-room cabal, &c. &c.—but to which I would reply particularly."

We reply, that the discontinuing the performances of Miss Kelly is assuredly no proof of Mr. Kemble's richness of purse. Miss Kelly has not been checked: she has appeared in other characters; it may be said, unfavorable ones, but even from their personation was decided that Miss Kelly could play but one part. This we believe to be a received opinion. We say, the stage affords too many such examples of first appearances. Mr. Mason was permitted to repeat *Norval*; and now, any half-dozen lines that may be rashly

consigned to him, are identified by a succeeding burst of laughter. We do not mean to associate Miss Kelly's pretensions with those of Mr. M. we would not so far under-rate her; but the case is the same, though differing in degree. But when DRAMATICUS talks about "caprice, cruelty," &c. the moon is again predominant, and we must leave him: he promises, however, to favor the public with circumstances, substantiating his accusation of "vanity, conceit, professional jealousy, cabal," &c.—he may; but should such puttings forth become "Star-chamber matter," we should prepare ourselves for depositions of the call-boy, and the dresses of Mrs. Such-a-one, and Miss Somebody.

FIVE IN ONE,

(Resumed from page 104.)

Pro. Thank ye, honest Humphrey; you have put me into spirits already. One would think he was *Emperor of the World*, he gives away his Crowns with so much ease. So, having raised a supply, I will call for a pint of wine, and arrange my ideas over it.

Enter FANNY.

Fanny. My dear Mr. Proteus! is this true? Father says he has desired you to leave the house.

Pro. Yes, my love, I have received notice to quit. But, *nil desperandum*; I do not yet despair of obtaining your father's consent to our marriage, as he has promised it, on three conditions.

Fanny. (eagerly.) Three conditions! what are they?

Pro. Hem! hem!

(hums a tune, and turns away.)

Fanny. I suppose it is a secret, and you won't confide it to me.

Pro. Why, lookye, Fanny; though I love all womankind as faithfully as "Adam did our mother Eve," and would go through fire and water to serve them; yet there is one thing I never can bring myself to do.

Fanny. What is that?

Pro. Trust a woman with a secret. If once she knows it, she travels through the town the first day, and is pretty well known all over the country before the week's expired. Therefore, take my life, but not my secret.

Fanny. (with evident mortification.) Oh, Mr. Secret Keeper, don't imagine I wish to know it. I have no curiosity I assure you. Though, I think, you might as well tell me.

Pro. Don't be angry, Fanny. Come, forgive me: won't you forgive me? *(kisses her hand; she smiles.)* Now our quarrel's adjusted. Contrive to send my trunk, with my masquerade dresses, over to the Robin Hood, and spread the report that I am gone to London.

Fanny. I will. Farewell, and Fortune prosper you.

Pro. And now kind Cupid, for once consent to remove the bandage from thine eyes,—league with thy most faithful votary, in cheating this old hunk of his daughter, and then command my services till you are tired of employing me. [Exit PROTEUS.]

Fanny. Heigho! was ever poor girl in such a situation so perplexed between love and duty. They say, love is lighter than air.

I am afraid if it was put into the scale with duty, on the present occasion, it would preponderate greatly on the side of the little god.

SONG.

(The Music composed by Mr. Nicholson.)

Pray, what are riches? what is treasure?
To the maid whose swain has fled?
She knows no peace, nor tastes of pleasure,
Without the lad she fain would wed.
Then tell me not that wealth awaits me,
'Tis love alone can make me blest.
My father scolds and often rates me,
While my sad, sad heart's oppress.

[Exit FANNY.]

(To be continued.)

Theatrical Diary.

DRURY LANE.

May 5th, *Othello*, *Chinese Sorcerer*—6th, *Cabinet*, *Killing no Murder*—7th, *Hypocrite*, *Ballet*, *Simpson & Co*—8th, *Venice Preserved*, *Marriage of Figaro*, *Devil to Pay*—9th, *Guy Mannering*, *Ballet*, *Simpson & Co*—10th, *Duenna*, *Ballet*, *Deaf as a Post*—12th, *Richard the Third*, *Love, Law, and Physic*—13th, *Travellers*, *Killing no Murder*—14th, *Cymbeline*, *Ballet*, £8. 10s. 1d. if quite convenient—15th, *Travellers*, *Love, Law, and Physic*—16th, *Othello*, *Ballet*, *Deaf as a Post*.

On Wednesday se'nnight the comedy of "*The Hypocrite*" was revived, in which Liston appeared to great advantage as *Maw-worm*, and Downton played *Doctor Cantwell* with his accustomed force and ability.

The estimation in which the public hold that judicious actor, Mr. Young, was never more apparent than on the evening that gentleman had his benefit: we could have wished, however, that he had selected some new piece, in which we should have had another opportunity of witnessing a display of his talents when in direct competition with Mr. Kean: but as it was, Mr. Y. appeared to exert himself to please his friends, which were as numerous as he could desire, the house being crowded to the very ceiling. Kean played *Jaffier* in a much superior style than when we last saw him, and was loudly and deservedly applauded. There was, however, a drawback to the evening's entertainment in the sudden indisposition of Mrs. W. West: this charming actress was evidently, in the earlier scenes of the play, suffering from the effects of illness, which afterwards was so much increased, as to render an apology from Mr. Young necessary. Mrs. W. played the part throughout; but her powers were considerably depressed by the cause we have spoken of. We would just suggest to actors and actresses, that, however praiseworthy it may be to furnish a good evening's entertainment on the benefits, it is not *absolutely necessary* to keep us poor critics from "our downy pillows" more than an hour after midnight, as was the case on this evening, the entertainments not being concluded till past one o'clock.

* Kean played *Richard the Third*, for the last time this season (as the play-bills say) on Monday last, with increased effect. The attrac-

tion of this tragedy, though it has been played so often, is not in the least diminished, for the house was very full.

The opera of the "*Travellers, or Music's Fascination*," was revived on Tuesday, for no other earthly reason that we could divine, but that of inflicting on us the fatigue of seeing four dull acts of a dull piece. We remember, some half-dozen years ago, to have read the author's apology for deviating from "the time-honoured custom" of writing more than three acts in this opera, and, if our memory fails not, he attributes it to the necessity of following the plan which some wiseacre like himself had laid down for his adoption; viz. that of giving effect to the national melodies of several countries.—Now, all this would have been pretty enough if the gentleman had condescended to favor us with *sense* as well as *sound*; but really in its present form, though the play-wright has called in three of the European and two Asiatic nations to his assistance, not a line of intelligible dialogue is there in the whole piece; for, notwithstanding the *Chinese Prince* talks a great deal about justice, mercy, patriotism, and "all that sort of thing," and there is an unusual quantity of hopes, fears, raptures, and other little fooleries of love, yet the whole is so clumsily put together, that it was with considerable difficulty we could prevent ourselves from *dozing* in concert with the performers, all of whom appeared to us to be under the influence of "death's counterfeit." The music is its only redeeming virtue, and but for that being exceedingly good, we are sure it would never have been played a second time. We can and do on all occasions applaud the zeal of Mr. Elliston in producing a succession of novelty; but we think the "learned Lessee" has travelled somewhat out of the road of good taste by selecting such an opera for revival. It was but last week we sat to witness the performance of Sheridan's *Dianna*, and when we saw the announcement of the "*Travellers*," we exclaimed with Hamlet, "what judgment could step from that to this." The acting, as we have before hinted, was of a piece with the opera:—Cooper walked as the *Prince*; Braham kept back some of his usual *spirited* acting in *Koyan*, but sung finely; Fitzwilliam was more than ordinarily vulgar in *O'Gallagher*. Miss Stephens seemed fettered by so bad a part, though she warbled sweetly. Mrs. Davison and Downton were the only two who can be considered as playing:—and as for the host of other we say *mum*.

The new songs introduced were just passable; but the scenery is truly magnificent.

After the performance of *Cymbeline* on Wednesday, a new farce, with the title of "*£8. 10s. 1d. if quite convenient*" was produced. From the oddness of the name, we were led to expect at least a small quantity of wit and humour; but we were soon convinced the name was its only recommendation. It would be an ungracious and certainly very unprofitable task, to enter into a description of the plot of a piece which was justly and wisely condemned; we shall therefore, on that subject, remain *sub silentio*.—The author can have no reason to complain of any want of activity in the actors, for every thing was done to make the farce go down; but the audience, by their disapprobation, told the author "*it was not quite convenient*" to swallow his stale jokes and abortive witticisms.

COVENT GARDEN.

May 5th, *Macbeth*, *Vision of the Sun*—6th, *Comedy of Errors*, *Vision of the Sun*—7th, *Much ado about Nothing*, *Vision of the Sun*—8th, *Clari*, or *the Maid of Milan*, *The Duel*—9th, *Clari*, *Vision of the Sun*—10th, *Clari*, *Irish Tutor*, *Raising the Wind*—12th, *Clari*, *Vision of the Sun*—13th, *Mr. Macready's Benefit*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Matrimony*, *Midas*—14th, *Miss Paton's Benefit*, *Belle's Stratagem*, *Barber of Seville*—15th, *Clari*, *Catherine and Petruchio*, *Irish Tutor*—16th, *Clari*, *Vision of the Sun*.

"*Clari*, the *Maid of Milan*," an opera, has been produced at this theatre with success. The incidents which, form its "strange eventful history" are as follows.

Clari, the daughter of a humble farmer, having been looked on with an eye of affection by a gallant *Duke*, is prevailed on, by love's "cunning argument," to quit her paternal roof, for his Grace's mansion, where he has promised to wed her by "holy bonds"—The piece opens at this juncture. *Clari* has been some days with the *Duke*; but yet remains the "*Maid of Milan*." His grace, it appears, still entertains a liking for the girl, but yet some qualms respecting difference of situation prevent him becoming an "honorable man;" he, however, with all the assiduity and assurances of a false deceiver, endeavours, by the introduction of pastimes, sumptuous presents, &c. to reconcile her to her fortune, and catch her in a silver net to hold at will. In this desire, players are introduced, who perform a piece nothing epic, about "the rugged Pyrrhus," but a little half-ballet, half-*operatic jeu d'esprit*, in which, strange to say, is recounted a story, so resembling that of *Clari*, that her feelings, overcome by the resemblance, urge her, to the astonishment of the beholders, to a frantic solicitation of forgiveness, as the player *father* is about to curse his runaway child; and here ends the first act. After this, the *Duke*, with a great deal of dignified nonchalance, and equal sincerity, undecieves *Clari*, and leaves the poor girl in misery extreme. *Clari*, is now bent on escape; and, after the usual dark chamber scene indispensable for the "moon-light flits" of lovers, courageously lets herself down from the terrace. Due time of course is given till her flight is discovered, and then the *Duke*, feeling some "compunctious visitings," occasioned by a billet-doux, doubtless written in the *Donna Julia* style, from *Clari*, talks "like a mau new-made," and flies off in pursuit of her. The third act is comprised of the hopes and fears of *Clari*, the grief and forgiveness of her father, and the *Duke's* avowal of repentance for past faults, accompanied by a solicitation of *Clari's* hand, which, of course, could not be denied, and the finale of grateful acknowledgment is accordingly sung.

This opera is of the true modern taste, a cater cousin to *Maid Marian*, but it possesses some sweet music, tolerable situation, and pleasing acting, all of which, like an extortionate yet pretty shopwoman, gain what they ask, though the article of traffic will not outbear the given price: but we cannot forbear being imposed on, and such weakness renders us the more frequent dupes. The language of this piece is, to quote from a minor burlesque, mere "flim flam flummery."

We must arraign Mr. Abbott for great want of attention and gentlemanly beseeching; for instance, when he enters, and sees poor *Clari* prostrate in the player-scene, not a single noble muscle betrays surprise, or agitation. His grace, as *Kenrick* says, stands "as cool as a cucumber," but perhaps Mr. A. thinks it beneath a *Duke* to pick up ladies. We know that he may argue, what his nobility afterwards pleads, that his ill-humour at such impolitic exposition of *Clari* checked his wonted gallantry; but the *Duke* actually loved the girl, and would from such impulse have bestowed "a trifling consideration."

Fawcett, as the *Father*, threw a reality into his sorrow, chaste and commanding: his scene with *Clari* excited the sensibilities of the audience. Pearman was in good spirits, and scambles through a

sort of Figaro, with much dash; he sings a song, in which his imitation of several instruments is well kept up. As for Keeley,—

“Although his portion is but scant,
“He does it with good will”—

a very inconsiderable part is made important by his ability; such is the power of true talent, united in a just observance of nature. To the reader who has ever taken a voyage to Margate, some idea may be had of *Meadows*, as a villager, from the recollection of the sweep and flap of a wheeling sea-gull.

But “now come in the sweets of the night.” Miss Tree as *Clari*. There is a charm which the soul and modesty of woman conjure to the mind, that in the mind only can they be known. Imagination cannot transcribe its whole delights, and some glowing images of thought for ever linger, too pure to fade, and too precious to divide: such is the spell which Miss Tree raises by her intellectual and impassioned personation of the loving “*Maid*.” We would not ever be thought to exaggerate; yet would rather have fastidious censure for fearless admiration, than limit one syllable of praise where it would be impossible to give too much. We know not in which consists the sweetest music; the heart awakening accents of her speaking sorrow, or in the magic melancholy of her vocal breathings. The plaudits of the audience are sufficient testimonies of her excellence. Miss Love gives us food for conjecture every evening: her rapid improvement is as astonishing as successful. Miss Beaumont repeated with great taste the prevailing ballad of the piece; and Miss Hallande performs the little assigned to her with much talent.

“*The Belle's Stratagem*” was played on Wednesday for Miss Paton's benefit. The principal attraction of the evening was the *Letitia Hardy* of Miss I. Paton, sister to the above-named lady. Where beauty, intellect, grace of manners, and elegance of diction demand opinion, it equally pleases “him that gives, and him that takes.” We know no greater pleasure than to yield the full award to such persuasive pleaders; and feel ourselves gratified for the opportunity this fair *debutanté* has presented to us, of indulging such predilection. Her first scene assured us of her ultimate success; and when the overpowering circumstance of novel situation was in part dissipated by the merited plaudits of a discerning audience, she broke upon us in the true fascinating smile of feminine witchery, varied it with changing character, and held her sway through the timid maiden, pretty idiot, and reasoning mistress, with most tyrannic power. It would be unnecessary now to enter into an analysis of her several scenes, further than they were all most excellent. We withhold from so doing, being as yet ignorant whether Miss I. Paton will pursue a work, at which she has proved so successful a beginner, but augur, should such be her intention, a high walk in that sphere for which so many qualifications design her: if otherwise, impressed by the resemblance of her powers, we shall at each similar announcement of her sister, instantly ask with *Snug* “doth the moon shine that night?”

Miss Paton sung *Crazy Jane*, in the masquerade scene, with touching melody: there was a sweetness in her upper notes that lived with the very soul of music.

Of Mr. C. Kemble's *Doricourt*, more cannot be said than has been, the attempt would be but to torture well-known praise into new expression. Jones as *Flutter* was all ease and flippancy, the true loungier, a real bottle of soda-water. Abbott's *Sir George Touchwood* was replete with good delivery and gentlemanly bearing. If Mr. Baker would but forego a certain listlessness of manner, we should be more pleased, and it would strengthen our opinion that he might be much better than he is.

The "*Barber of Seville*" followed, in which Miss Paton charmed us by her never too frequent repetition of its well-known music. The house was most elegantly and fully attended.

SURREY THEATRE.

The proprietor of this establishment has certainly a very excellent knack of producing novelty; no matter from what source it be derived. A rapid succession of entertainment, and "plenty for money," is the presiding custom, and during the last few weeks the Surrey Theatre may boast of being the "first in the throng." We were somewhat surprized, some eight or ten days since, on reading an immense placard announcing most "extraordinary novelty for one night only."—The "*Mountaineers*," "*Sylvester Daggerwood*," and the "*Dog of Montargis*," (each of which has been worn to the "back-bone,") the part of *Octavian* by "a professional gentleman," who also favoured us with a huge list of *critiques* upon his first-rate ability, describing himself as having attained wonderful eminence at various provincial theatres, and other prominent requisites appertaining to the specific value, &c. of his "professional career, Expectation was strung to the utmost point, and we hurried over the water, scarcely allowing a moment's breath, so much was the anxiety our feelings manifested in the cause. Another star in the bright hemisphere of dramatic excellence was no idle sight to "gaze upon;" and we sat ourselves down in the ardent hope of being dazzled outright with its refulgent glory.—The house was tolerably crowded—the gods commenced their halo.—At length the curtain rises! all seems tedious until the approach of *Octavian*;—the moment arrives, and in rushes with all his "native wildness" (only imagine readers our chagrin) that eccentric genius Mr Grove!! Mr. Grove, whose benefits at the Haymarket, West London, and other theatres, have excited no little drollery. Well then, after all, this "professional gent" turns out to be Mr. Grove, "poet, prompter and performer," and formerly of *Russell-court, Drury-lane*, so nigh to the royal temple of melpomene, it is not to be wondered at that Mr. Grove should be an enthusiast in its rights. It would be tiresome to enter into the merits or rather *demerits* of this "professional gentleman's *Octavian*:"—to relate into how many "shreads and tatters" passion was torn, or to say a word more than that it was a performance worthy of Mr. Grove, and all such persons who might encourage buffoonery instead of sterling merit. Of the other performers in the "*Mountaineers*," the *Sadi* of Buckingham was good; also *Bulcazin Muley* by Jervis. Mrs. Gardiner made a pretty looking *Agnes*.

The interlude of "*Sylvester Daggerwood*," with Buckingham's *Imitations*, the "*Esquimaux Indians*," and the "*Dog of Montargis*," finished the evening. The house was immensely crowded. Surely it would benefit Mr. Burroughs to ensure the abilities of Mr. Grove for six nights. "*Hamlet*" to begin with—really it would be amusing. We could wish the manager's attention to this matter. The house has been since our last extremely well attended: a succession of novelties have been produced, and many others are promised, which we shall notice in our next.

ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE.

We attended this theatre on the present occasion, with an assurance that, up to a certain degree, our attention, and with it our secession from more important duties, would not go so ill rewarded as was the case of a previous evening.

The unfavorable impression generally formed with the witnessing of amateur performances, was strongly removed by the appearance of the announce bills of Mr. Thomas's benefit, inasmuch, that they lead us to consider that matters would go on tolerably at least,—we were not disappointed.

"*The Heir at Law*" is an agreeable comedy, and cannot fail of pleasing, if the slightest respect be paid to its general interest. The representative of *Lord Duberly*, a Mr. Barnes, possesses much humour, and with attention to originality would do better. We remember to have made an observation in one of our former notices of the wide difference between a genteel man and that of a gentleman. *Dick Dowlas* gave us "ocular proof" of this observation. The gentleman who played *Steadfast*, instead of portraying the sober gravity of the old school, with powdered wig, &c. seemed habituated with the intemperate airs of coxcombry, and carried with it the extreme of dandyism. How could Mr. Ford of the *East London Theatre* so mistake the character. The *Dr. Pangloss* of Mr. Thomas is not in his immediate sphere: it was far from being contemptible; but there are other characters that we could point out more likely for his success. *Zekiel Homespun* was remarkably chaste and effective—his enunciation was strong, and perfectly genuine. *Mr. Courtney* (Henry Morland) is an attentive young man conversant with the business of the stage, and in a superior range of characters his talent would be quite efficient. We cannot speak too warmly of the abilities of Mrs. Southey, whose performance of *Lady Duberly* was particularly good: the proprietor of this theatre would find a considerable acquisition in the strength of her excellent acting. Among the entertainments between the play and farce the song of *The Beautiful Boy*, in imitation of *Sloman*, was admirably given. A gentleman also amused us by the recital of the mad scene of *Orestes*, from the "*Distressed Mother*," it was excessively comical. The farce of the "*Irishman in London*," closed the performances. The house was very crowded. Much praise is due for the correctness of the stage arrangements, there being not two minutes delay throughout.

The "*Provoked Husband*," and "*Love, Law, and Physic*." Benefit of Mrs. Symes. The performance of this comedy was, in

every sense of the word, *execrable*, with the solitary exception of Manley, whose only drawback was a very bad figure. The whole family of the *Wrongheads* proved their legitimate title to the name. *My Lord* and *Lady Townley* seemed more adapted for the tap room of a public house, than to mix with genteel society: their manners being repulsively vulgar and coarse. *Lady Grace* had any thing but grace; and *John Moody* gave us the horrors. Of "*Love, Law, and Physic*," we, out of pure charity, refrain from saying any thing.

DAVIS'S ROYAL AMPHITHEATRE.

The only alterations at this theatre has been the production of a piece called "*Doctor Syntax and another Doctor*," which was withdrawn before we had an opportunity of seeing it, and the revival of the "*Secret Mine*," with all its former splendour. Mrs. Makeen plays the part of *Araxa* very well; although we do not approve of the custom of ladies so often assuming the *breeches*. The house has been well attended, and on many occasions crowded.

ROYAL COBURG.

A second view of "*Magna Charta, or the Reign of King John*," has given us no reason to alter the opinion we expressed in our last: of its general merits as a melodrama of powerful interest there cannot be a question, although we could have wished that Mr. Milner had presented to us the *exact* circumstances attendant on the execution of the great charter. We recollect when at school the impression made upon us by a perusal of the anathema's uttered by the Archbishop of Canterbury against the violation of the sacred contract, and the act of the King and the Barons in throwing down lighted torches, together with the almost demoniac menaces of revenge for a breach of its conditions. These are circumstances little known to any but the scholar: and had they been partially softened down by Mr. M. would have made the piece very impressive, and increased the interest materially. Rowbotham (in the absence of Huntley) played *King John* on Thursday evening, and acquitted himself very creditably: this actor appears to have a well cultivated understanding, by which means, though he never astonishes by any extraordinary display of genius, he is *always* chaste and respectable in his delineation of character.

The new after-piece, called the "*Maid of the Forest, or the Accusing Son*," is a very fair production: the story is well told and the moral good.

Previous to concluding our remarks on this house, we would just call the attention of those who have the control of such matters, to the shameful neglect of some of the actors who played in the last piece the evening we have named; if it is the uniform practice here to put a parcel of *sticks* in their crowned heads and priees, they should at least teach them to speak sense, for one of these regal usurpers favored us with the word *indentify*; another talked about his *illustrious* heart, and one or two forgot even *their own names*: this is scandalous; and is at the same time a gross injustice to the poor author's piece, who has, God knows, difficulties enough to contend against, without their being increased by stupidity of actors, or their no less censurable neglect.

SADLERS WELLS.

Mr. Egerton has reason to rejoice that the *labors* of his *Mountains* are not so profitless as those in the fable of old, for they bring him full houses and merry audiences. The interesting melo-drame of the "*Innkeeper of Abbeville*" has been well played, particularly by Vining, whose personation of the ruffian was most admirable. We are not captious, and we care not how ridiculous an actor makes himself, so that he does not set propriety quite at defiance, we would therefore just hint to the stage-manager, not to let his Subordinates make so much of their little bits of *fat*, (to speak theatrically) we allude particularly to the *Beadle* in "*Dolly and the Rat*," which was too outrageous to be tolerated.—Let Mr. Stage-manager look to this.

LIABILITY OF ACTORS.

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS—WEDNESDAY, MAY 14.

(Sittings at Guildhall, before Mr. Justice Burrough.)

R. W. ELLISTON v. WEBSTER.

Mr. Sergeant Taddy said, that in this case, the plaintiff, who is the lessee of Drury-Lane Theatre, had thought it necessary to bring an action against the defendant, who was a performer, for a breach of contract. The action was brought, not for the purpose of obtaining damages, but to shew that his engagements were not to be broken at the arbitrary will of performers. The defendant did not perform very high characters, yet, if the letters he had sent soliciting an engagement might be relied on, it would seem that he was a very useful individual, for he offered to play *Rosencrantz*, or *Guildenstern*, *Harlequin*, or *Pantolon*, or the *Walking Gentleman*. To the latter character, indeed, he seemed particularly attached, and had performed it too well, for, after having played a few months, he took it into his head to play the "*Walking Gentleman*" to perfection, by walking off to Birmingham. The Jury, however, would teach him, on such occasions, to "*go slow*," and to mind his contracts.

The letters of the defendant, dated in August and September, 1820, and in July 1821, soliciting an engagement, were then put in and proved.

Mr. Winston was called.—He stated that he was acting manager of Drury-Lane Theatre. Saw the defendant after the receipt of the letters in the course of August, 1821. Witness then told him that Mr. Elliston agreed to engage him for the next season at a small advance, but not at the advance proposed. The salary for him and his wife would then be £2 5s. a week. It had been previously but £2. That engagement was for 1821 and 1822. The salary was play-house pay—that was, pay only when the house was open. In Lent, for instance, there was no pay. Defendant and his wife attended during part of that season. On the 18th of May, 1822, after having received his salary, he absented himself. He then sent a note declaring that "business obliged him to leave town." He played that night, but not afterwards. Witness told the defendant to meet him at Mr. Elliston's room, which he did. Mr. Elliston then advised the defendant not to go, as his engagement would be enforced in a court of law. Defendant said he would; and from that time to the end of the season he absented himself.

Cross-examined.—Did not recollect that the defendant had complained of Mr. Elliston's treatment of him.

Sergeant Vaughan.—Do you recollect the defendant having complained of Elliston's having taken improper liberties with his wife more than once? Witness.—I do not recollect that he made any such complaints.

Mr. Sergeant Vaughan.—Upon your solemn oath will you swear that Mr. and Mrs. Webster did not complain that he had taken improper liberties with her? Witness.—I am sure they did not say he had taken improper liberties with her.

Mr. Sergeant Vaughan.—Now that he had taken improper liberties with other females in her presence?

Mr. Justice Burroughs here stopped the examination, and said, that whatever liberties Mr. Elliston might have taken with other females, they could not be maintained as evidence in this case.

Mr. Sergeant Vaughan.—What, if Elliston's conduct has been ever so gross in the presence of Mrs. Webster, am I precluded from going into evidence upon it?

Mr. Justice Burrough.—Certainly, in the present case.

Mr. Sergeant Vaughan.—Then I must confine myself to his conduct to Mrs. Webster?

Mr. Justice Burrough.—If you attempt that and fail, I shall advise the plaintiff to go for damages.

Mr. Sergeant Taddy.—Certainly, I shall, my Lord.

Mr. Sergeant Vaughan.—You'll go for whatever you can get, and get whatever the Jury think you entitled to.

Witness resumed.—He did not hear any complaint of that sort from Mr. and Mrs. Webster. The season did not usually end in Passion-week. It did so in the first year of Mr. Webster's engagement, and in the second year also. That arose from Mr. Kean's going to America, and from the nature of Mr. Elliston's lease of the theatre. None of the actors were at liberty to go at the end of Passion-week, except those engaged by articles. A bill was here placed in witness's hand, dated the 30th of March, in which that day was stated to be the end of the season. Witness explained this by saying, that if the performers went on after that day, it was to be considered as an engagement for the next season. Defendant continued to play after that time until the following May.

Sergeant Vaughan here submitted two objections; the first was, that every count in the declaration stated the season of 200 nights to begin in October, and alleged a breach of the engagement during that season. By the evidence it appeared, that the season properly ended on the 30th of March, and that the time in which the house continued open after that period, was strictly a second season. It was proved that the defendant had not broken his engagement until May, which was clearly not a part of the season stated in the declaration. The second objection was, that the letters of the defendant, if offered in evidence as part of the contract, should have been stamped.

Mr. Justice Burrough was of opinion that the first objection was fatal, but he would reserve both points for the consideration of the Court above.

A verdict was then taken for the plaintiff for nominal damages, with liberty to move to set it aside on these objections.

Chespiian Oracle.

PORTSMOUTH THEATRE.—April 28th, Mr. Kelly's benefit took place under the patronage of the Officers of the Provisional Battalion. The house was crowded to excess, and every one appeared gratified at the manager's intention of keeping the theatre open a few nights longer. The "*West Indian*," and "*Lodoisca*," were uncommonly well performed. May 2d, "*Secrets Worth Knowing*," and "*Match Making*," were performed for the benefit of Mr. and Mrs. Shalders, who, with Messrs. Floyer, Cooke, Denman, and Miss Collins, Miss Kelly, and Mrs. Jefferson, exerted their abilities in the most satisfactory manner; and long and loud plaudits evinced the feeling of the house to Mr. and Mrs. Shalders. On the 7th was Miss Kelly's benefit. It was the intention of the officers of the garrison to have performed "*Julian*;" but, owing to the illness of the gentleman who was to have played the principal character, it was put off, and the "*Law of Java*" substituted. The part of *Xadi*, by Miss Kelly, was performed in her very best style; every one of her songs were encored: her performance of *Myrtillo*, in the "*Dumb Orphan*" was equally good, and produced great applause. The house was most fashionably attended, and crowded to excess. The company have removed to Chichester, which boasts of the prettiest country theatre in England. The performances opened with the "*Jealous Wife*," Mr. Oakly, by Mr. Shalders, *Major Oakly*, Mr. Forrest, and the *Jealous Wife*, Miss Kelly, were fine specimens of their respective abilities. The "*Actress of all Work*," by Miss Kelly, pleased the Chichester people. A description of their other performances will be given in our next publication.

Portsmouth, May 8th, 1823.



THE SOURCE OF THE RIVER - 1847
and 1848



MR. KEAN AS LEONATUS POSTHUMUS.
in
Cymbeline.